

**THE BRITISH SPECIES OF *METZNERIA*, *PALTODORA*,
ISOPHRICTIS, *APODIA*, *EULAMPROTES* AND *ARGOLAMPROTES*
(LEPIDOPTERA: GELECHIIDAE)**

PAUL A. SOKOLOFF

4 Steep Close, Green Street Green, Orpington, Kent BR6 6DS

and ERIC S. BRADFORD

Brooklands, Pean Hill, Canterbury Road, Whistable, Kent CT5 3BB.

This is the second in a series of papers describing and illustrating the British Gelechiidae. The first (Sokoloff, 1985) covered the genera *Teleiodes* and *Teleiopsis* and dealt with some general aspects of the family, including a diagram of a gelechiid wing showing the positions of the fold, discal and plical spots, characters which are used in some of the descriptions below; with this paper we deal with the 14 species belonging to the genera *Metzneria*, *Paltodora*, *Isophrictis*, *Apodia*, *Eulamprotes*, and *Argolamprotes*.

Metzneria Zeller

The genus *Metzneria* comprises about 40 species distributed throughout the palaearctic region. Most are univoltine, and six occur within the British Isles, two reasonably commonly. All but one of the British species feed on the seeds of members of the Compositae, the exception being *Metzneria littorella* Dougl., the larva of which feeds on the seeds of *Plantago coronopus* L. (Plantaginaceae).

Adults of *Metzneria* are not often encountered in the wild, and breeding is the best way of obtaining specimens. Seedheads or stems as appropriate should be collected from late autumn to early spring, and kept outside in net bags, protected from the worst of the elements.

Metzneria littorella (Dougl.) Fig. 1

Wingspan 9–14 mm. Ground colour of forewing greyish-white, sprinkled with fuscous scales; a blackish subcostal dot at one third; stigmata black, plical before first discal, preceded by a black dot, both placed on a longitudinal ochreous-yellow streak; first and second discal spots placed in a similar streak; terminal black dots, rather obscure. Hindwings greyish-white.

Moth flies in May and June. Known only from the Isle of Wight (Ventnor), but could possibly occur on mainland Britain.

Larva almost apodal, yellowish-white; head blackish; prothoracic plate brown, bisected. Feeding on the seeds of buck's-horn plantain (*Plantago coronopus* L.) September to March. Pupates in the stem just underneath the seedhead.

Metzneria lappella (L.) (*silacea* sensu Haw.) Fig. 2

Wingspan 16–20 mm. Ground colour of forewing pale ochreous variously streaked or suffused brown; lines of greyish-brown scales tending to follow veins, sometimes obsolete. Stigmata blackish, first discal occasionally obsolete; Hindwings grey.

Moth flies June to July. Widely distributed and often common in south-east England in a line from south Devon to Cambridgeshire, with a second band of distribution stretching from Clwyd across to Humberside, and north to Northumberland. Recorded in Scotland only from Kincardineshire. Not recorded from Ireland. Probably overlooked elsewhere.

Larva whitish; head dark fuscous. Feeding on the seeds of greater burdock (*Arctium lappa* L.) September to April. Pupates in the seedhead.

1. *M. liltorella*

2. *M. lappella*

3. *M. aestivella*

4. *M. metzneriella*

5. *M. neuropterella*

6. *M. aprilella*

7. *P. cytisella*

8. *P. cytisella*

9. *I. striatella*

10. *A. bifractella*

11. *E. atrella*

12. *E. phaeella*

13. *E. unicolorella*

14. *E. wilkella*

15. *E. wilkella*

16. *A. micella*



Metzneria aestivella Zell. (*carlinella* staint.) Fig. 3

Wingspan 13–16 mm. Ground colour of forewing pale-ochreous to ochreous, more or less wholly suffused reddish-ochreous; margins and veins partly marked with greyish-fuscous lines. Hindwings grey.

Moth flies June to July. Widely distributed in the southern counties of England from Cornwall through to Essex. Isolated records from elsewhere, especially northwest Wales. Nottingham and north to Northumberland. Not yet recorded from Scotland or Ireland.

Larva whitish; head and prothoracic plate blackish. Feeding on the seeds of carline thistle (*Carlina vulgaris* L.) October to April. A few raised florets often indicate the presence of a larva. Pupates in the seedhead.

Metzneria metzneriella (Staint.) Fig. 4

Wingspan 14–19 mm. Ground colour of forewing pale ochreous-yellow, reddish-ochreous streaks towards costa; margins and veins more or less suffused grey, sprinkled fuscous; stigmata black, first discal much beyond plical. Hindwings grey.

Moth flies June to August. The commonest and most widely distributed of our *Metzneria* species, recorded from most parts of England, north and west Wales, Scotland as far north as Fifeshire and Dunbartonshire. In Ireland recorded from Co. Clare, south-east Galway and Dublin.

Larva whitish-yellow, head and prothoracic plate dark fuscous. Feeding on the seeds of common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra* L.), or, less commonly, saw-wort (*Serratula tinctoria* L.) October to April. Pupates in the seedhead.

Metzneria neuropterella (Zell.) Fig. 5

Wingspan 14–24 mm. Specimens can vary greatly in size. Ground colour of forewing pale ochreous, reddish-ochreous along costa and towards apex; veins marked with dark grey-brown lines, terminally suffused; indistinct spots on costa at base, beyond middle and apex, and an oblique, sometimes interrupted bar from costa before middle. Hindwings grey.

Moth flies June to August. Local and uncommon, in all probability overlooked. Known from Kent, Hampshire, Dorset, East Sussex, Surrey, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Middlesex. Westmorland is the only northern record.

Larva dull yellowish; head brown. Feeding on seeds of knapweed (*Centaurea nigra* L.) October to May. Pupates in the seedhead.

Metzneria aprilella (H.-S.) Fig. 6

Wingspan 15–18 mm. Ground colour of forewing grey-brown; yellowish streaks at base and occasionally at two-thirds and beyond; veins and fold marked with reddish-vermillion; reddish-vermillion streaks along costa. Hindwings darkish grey.

Moth flies May to August. This striking insect was first recognized as British in 1981 (Sattler, 1981), and a number of specimens have been found in collections misidentified as *M. neuropterella*. As a recently recognized British species, the distribution picture is far from complete, but records so far indicate the species is widespread in suitable habitats, mainly in central-southern and eastern England. There are isolated records as far north as Northumberland. The first British specimens were bred in July 1971 from seedheads of *Centaurea scabiosa* L. collected in the autumn of 1970 at Chilbolton, Hampshire, by E.C. Pelham-Clinton and D.W.H. Ffennell.

Larva not described but feeding on the seeds of greater knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa* L.) September to March. Pupates in the seedhead.

Paltodora Meyrick

The genus *Paltodora* is monotypic.

Paltodora cytisella (Curt.) Figs 7 and 8

Wingspan 10–12 mm. Two colour forms are illustrated. Forewing ochreous-yellow suffused fuscous towards costa, or wholly suffused rather dark fuscous; an oblique whitish line from two thirds and sometimes an outwards-oblique whitish tornal mark, often obsolete in dark specimens; several faint pale dashes in costal cilia sometimes visible. Hindwings dark grey.

Moth flies July to August. Widespread, particularly in southern and eastern England and north Wales, ranging northwards to Cumbria. In Ireland it has been recorded from Wicklow, Wexford and North Kerry. Not recorded from Scotland. Comes readily to light.

Larva dark red; head fuscous; prothoracic plate blackish-brown; spiracles white. Feeding May and June in the stems of bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum* L.), causing a slight swelling. Aborted side-shoots may also indicate the presence of a larva. Pupates in the stem. To rear this species, stems should be collected as near to emergence time as possible as cut stems rot quickly, killing the pupa.

Isophrictis Meyrick

The genus *Isophrictis* is of European and North American distribution. The larvae feed on the stems or seedheads of members of the Compositae. Of the 20 or more species, only one occurs in Britain.

Isophrictis striatella (D.&S.) (*tanacetella* Schr.) Fig. 9

Wingspan 11–13 mm. Ground colour of forewing dark brown; termen squarish; an indistinct ochreous-white longitudinal line and another along fold interrupted on anterior stigmata; second discal stigma black; a fine white oblique line from four-fifths of costa to termen; black scaling at apex and three black lines with some white dashes in cilia. Hindwings dark grey.

Moth flies July to August. Although recorded from the east of South Devon, occurs mainly in south-east England in a line from Hampshire to Cambridgeshire. In the north known from Gwynedd in Wales and Aberdeenshire in Scotland. No doubt overlooked elsewhere.

Larva yellowish; head black; prothoracic plate bisected, light grey. Feeding on the seeds of tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare* L.) or sneezewort (*Achillea ptarmica* L.) November to April. Pupates in a dead stem. Small holes in the stem often indicate the presence of a pupa.

Apodia Heinemann

The genus *Apodia* contains two European species, one of which occurs in Great Britain.

Apodia bifractella (Dup.) Fig. 10

Wingspan 9–12 mm. Head and palpi orange. Ground colour of forewing dark fuscous, sprinkled whitish-grey scales, dorsally more or less mixed ferruginous-orange; a more distinct tornal orange mark; an ochreous-white or pale orange costal spot beyond it, sometimes finely connected. Forewing markings in some specimens obscure or hardly discernable. Hindwings dark grey.

Moth flies July to August. Widely distributed in southern England and Wales where foodplant occurs. Also in north Wales. Rests on the flowers of the foodplant in the afternoon and evening.